

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00087 231724Z

72

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 IO-03 PM-03 SP-02 L-01 INR-05

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 /034 W

----- 011459

R 231330Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4344

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0087

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, US, SF

SUBJECT: REPRESENTATION TO SAG CONCERNING SASO/BPC DETAINEES

REF: (A) CAPE TOWN 904; (D) LONDON 16517

1. IN REFTEL (A), AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF USG SHOULD NOT ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH BRITISH INTEREST IN MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENT ON ISSUE OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS. WHILE WE STILL HOLD TO THIS VIEW, BELIEVE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO SAG ON SPECIFIC ISSUE OF SASO AND BPC DETAINEES, AS OPPOSED TO ISSUE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN GENERAL.

2. UNLESS DEPARTMENT HAS OBJECTIONS, AMBASSADOR PROPOSES TO SEEK APPOINTMENT NEXT WEEK TO SPEAK TO FOREIGN SECRETARY FOURIE ABOUT LENGTHY DETENTION OF SASO AND BPC MEMBERS. AMBASSADOR WOULD NOTE OUR DEEP CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUED INCOMMUNICATE DETENTION OF THESE AFRICANS, WHO HAVE NO RECOURSE WHATSOEVER TO COUNSEL OR ANY OTHER LEGAL PROCEDURES AND WHO HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY DENIED ANY FORM OF DUE PROCESS.

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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00087 231724Z

3. IN ADDITION, HOWEVER, BELIEVE AMBASSADOR SHOULD ALSO

TAKE A POSITIVE APPROACH WITH SOUTH AFRICANS ON THIS ISSUE. THAT IS, HE WOULD REMIND THEM OF THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH BLACK AFRICAN STATES, ESPECIALLY NEIGHBORING STATES. DETENTION UNDER TERRORISM ACT OF LARGE NUMBER OF MAINLY YOUTHFUL SOUTH AFRICAN BLACKS IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE A PROMINENT ISSUE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SOUTH AFRICA. THEREFORE, AMBASSADOR WOULD POINT OUT THAT IN ADDITION TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE INVOLVED, CONTINUED DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL OF SASO AND BPC MEMBERS IS DIRECTLY CONTRARY TO SOUTH AFRICA'S OWN INTERESTS IN IMPROVING ITS FOREIGN RELATIONS WITH AFRICAN STATES. DETAINEES SHOULD EITHER BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL IF EVIDENCE WARRANTS OR BE RELEASED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

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